



*Library of The Theological Seminary*

PRINCETON · NEW JERSEY



PRESENTED BY

A. G. Cameron, Ph.D.

5.18.11

5CC  
8269











✓ Miscellaneous pamphlets

Vol. 2



*Mt. Vernon.*  
*Pamphlet*  
*Vol II*

# THOUGHTS

ON THE SYSTEM OF



## Evangelizing Organizations,

SUITED TO THE

## KINGDOM OF CHRIST

BY

WILLIAM ✓ CROWELL.

NEW YORK :

PRINTED BY EDWARD O. JENKINS,

No. 26 Frankfort Street.

1859.



## [ R E Q U E S T . ]

---

NEW YORK, *April*, 1859.

REV. WM. CROWELL, D. D.:

DEAR SIR:—You are well aware, no doubt, that for more than a year past the public mind has been aroused to a consideration of very important questions, relating to the Missionary Organizations of the Baptist denomination in this country. The existing system of evangelizing agencies has been made the subject of a most searching discussion, and very diverse views have been promulgated by means of pamphlets, newspapers, letters, addresses, and the ordinary communications of social intercourse. The general interest in the discussion seems to be increasing, and also a desire for such a degree of unity of opinion as may ensure unity of action on the part of our churches throughout the land.

The undersigned, believing that you have devoted an unusual degree of attention to the study of the Baptist polity, to the principles that underlie it, as well as to its varied practical operations; believing, too, that you have observed their application and development from different points of view, both in the east and the west, amid a great variety of circumstances, desire to avail themselves of the opportunity furnished by your visit to New York, to draw forth from you a free and full exposition of your views in regard to these agitated topics.

They would be glad to receive this either in the form of a public address, to be delivered at some convenient time and place, or in the form of a communication from your pen, to be printed and published.

|                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| WILLIAM HAGUE,     | Z. RING,            |
| WILLIAM W. TODD,   | A. DECKER,          |
| BENJAMIN CLAPP,    | WILLIAM JAMES TODD, |
| GEORGE GAULT,      | H. M. BALDWIN,      |
| B. T. WELCH,       | A. H. BURLINGHAM,   |
| WILLIAM PHELPS,    | ROBERT COLBY,       |
| NATHAN C. PLATT,   | LEVI HAYDEN,        |
| WILLIAM R. MARTIN, | R. W. MARTIN,       |
| PHARCELLUS CHURCH, | R. STOUT.           |

# THOUGHTS

ON THE SYSTEM OF

## EVANGELIZING ORGANIZATIONS,

SUITED TO THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

---

TO REV. W. HAGUE, D. D., COL. W. W. TODD, BENJ. CLAPP, Esq., and others:

BRETHREN :—

It is true that I have paid some special attention to the study and development of Baptist principles, because in them I found the true ideal of the kingdom of Christ. If I am to take the Holy Scriptures as the complete and only rule of faith, and the New Testament as the only authority for the formation, ordinances and government of the churches of Christ, then the aggregate of churches so formed and governed is the true, and the only true, organized kingdom of Christ on the earth.

The primary idea of that kingdom is set forth by our Lord in His conversation with Nicodemus. If there be a kingdom of Christ in this world at the present day, then those who are described as begotten, or made anew by the Spirit, are the only persons who can belong to it. They are “born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” This is the grand distinction between that kingdom and the kingdom of Israel. The members of the latter were born of blood,—they were the children of Israel after the flesh; the members of the other are the sons of God by the Spirit. Thus the kingdom of God on earth is called the kingdom of Heaven, because it is the true type of that kingdom which shall be perfected in holiness and in glory.

What the glorified kingdom will be, that on earth is struggling to realize and exhibit to the world.

Taking, then, this solemn declaration of our Lord, that none but the regenerate can be members of His kingdom, on earth or in Heaven, I was led to inquire whether the churches of Christ, the aggregate of which must make up His kingdom on earth, ought to be formed of the regenerate only.—I found the first historic mention of a church as actually existing on earth—the church in Jerusalem—to be in these words: “The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Doddridge prefers to translate it, “such as were saved.” But I suppose it means, such as were in the course or process of being saved; that is, those who were born of the Spirit, and were now working out their salvation, knowing that God was working in them. I cannot conceive of a more concise, comprehensive, definite, or exact description of a church, in any form of words. Here, then, we have the true idea of the first church, and, as I suppose, the pattern of every true church to the end of time. Those who joined it were such as “the Lord added.” And we are informed whom He added. Nor do I find the record of a single deviation from this rule. When churches were formed in Samaria and Galilee, and in the cities of Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Philippi, there is abundant evidence that they were all made up like the first, of “the sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints.” I am unable to find any evidence that the Apostles received into the churches infants, or servants, or seekers, or any persons except those who were believed to have “passed from death unto life.”

I found further, that those who gave evidence of this saving change were baptized; nor could I find the slightest evidence that any others—except hypocrites, who

falsely professed to be such,—as Simon Magus, Ananias and Sapphira—were baptized. I found that they were baptized in token of the remission of sins already past; and of their death to sin, and resurrection to righteousness, and that, “*therefore*, we are buried with Him (Christ) by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” I could not find the record of a single baptism that did not conform to this principle; as it related to the subject of the ordinance, its symbolic import, and its relation to the Church and Kingdom of Christ.

Now, brethren, these are very simple ideas, and that may be the reason why so many of the “wise and prudent” have failed to receive them. But if I have given special attention to the study of Baptist principles, it is because I find them in the word of God. I have not gone to the Bible to find support for those principles, but to find the truth. If Baptist principles present the true outline of the kingdom of our Redeemer, then I have not studied them in vain. “Buy the truth and sell it not.” I recognize among you, brethren, those who have labored many years by means of the pen, and of the living voice, and by a liberal devotion of your substance, to promote these principles, and extend them over the earth. Why have you done it? Not, surely, to extend a denomination,—a mere name, or a sect—but because you believe that in these principles the Kingdom of your Lord and Saviour is embodied and set forth before the world. You would not lift a finger to extend these principles, if you did not believe them to be identified with the Kingdom of Christ.

If this be not our view of the matter, brethren, then we have not made an honest profession of our faith. If



it be, then we ought to desire to fill the world with our doctrine. We cannot labor to extend the Gospel without at the same time laboring to spread Baptist principles. When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," what can we mean but that all men should yield obedience to every command of Christ? And can we honestly pray that others may obey while we refuse to obey? And, if we believe that the Kingdom of our Lord is truly set forth in these principles, we cannot, as honest men, desire that any doctrines adverse to them should make progress in the world. We may approve virtue and piety wherever we find it—in Jew or Gentile; we can rejoice that Christianity, even in a very defective form, is making progress; we ought to be lovers of all good men, wherever found; but in our labors to extend our Master's Kingdom, we must labor according to our honest convictions of what that kingdom is. It is written, "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." If they were on the earth now, we suppose that they would also be called Baptists, as we now are, because the existence of so many sects would render some additional name necessary. It is an ancient and honorable name,—more ancient even than the name Christian; and we ought not to be ashamed of a name that connects us with "the beginning of the Gospel," and with that ordinance by which we profess "to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I take it for granted, brethren, that we have all received and love Baptist principles for the simple reason that they embody and set forth the kingdom of Christ, according to the New Testament. And while we believe that love to God and to men is the life of all true religion, that without it the best professions and the strictest adherence to primitive order "is as sounding brass and a



tinkling symbol," yet we insist on keeping the Church of Christ pure from all human additions. For one, I desire to have nothing to do with building up sects or denominations. "Let them alone : every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." If, in spite of their errors, they do good, let them do it. But let us build up the Kingdom of our Redeemer, just as we have received it from the living oracles, not spending too much time in opposing the sects around us, never copying after any of their measures or policy.

The Baptists have become a numerous and a widely extended people. Our churches are found in every State and Territory of the United States, in most of them in great numbers. According to the Baptist Almanac for the present year, there are eleven thousand six hundred Baptist churches, containing near a million of members, in the United States ; besides half as many more who practice adult immersion as the only baptism. I look upon these facts as among the marvels of modern history. Those churches have received few accessions by immigration from Europe ; they seem to be the spontaneous outgrowth from a free Bible, a separation of Church and State, a free pulpit and a free press, under the quickening power of the Divine Spirit. Our churches multiply beyond all possibility of supplying them with an educated ministry. Can any reason be given why these principles have not had a similar development in Europe, but because they have been crushed under the iron heel of political power, or overshadowed and choked by the thorns of governmental religious establishments ? Wherever the rigors of persecution have been relaxed, Baptist churches "spring up as the grass, and as willows by the water courses." In France, in the various states and cities of Germany, in Sweden, and Denmark, churches are multiplying. And

although each of these churches is a distinct, independent body, each complete in itself for all the purposes of government and discipline, yet all are one in spirit, in principle, in aim, and effort,—all, when walking in the light, guided by the indwelling spirit of Christ, ready to flow together in one great stream of holy beneficence.

Now, it seems to me, that a thoughtful study of the lessons of Scripture and of history will show not only that our principles make us “a peculiar people,” but that we are, at present, in a somewhat peculiar crisis. Some of our churches are numerous and wealthy, others small, scattered and poor. On all the vital points of faith and duty, we are more nearly one body than any other on the earth. But in our organizations for extending the Kingdom of Christ, it appears that we have not fully settled on our plans of action. We acknowledge the general duty of laboring to give practical effect to the first and greatest petition in our Lord’s Prayer, and to execute His farewell commission, yet we are not agreed on modes of action. We admit the obligation of making known the Gospel to all the world, by personal efforts, and by giving of our substance ; but we differ respecting the manner of doing it. So that a feeling, like that in the camp of Israel at the chilling reports of the spies, seems to be coming over some of us ; and the proposal, “Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt,” is likely to be greeted with no lack of candidates for the office. But are Baptists willing to see our great and rapidly increasing body turn back ? No, brethren ; I hear the voice of God, in His glorious providence towards us, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward.” What if the mountains are on either hand, and the host of the Egyptians behind, and the Red Sea before us!—let us go forward.

The question is, what plan of operations will enlist the whole Baptist body in the work of converting the world to God? Are our present organizations defective, and if so, how can they be improved so as to meet the case? I believe that we shall succeed in our general organizations only so far as they conform to our fundamental and distinctive principles. It is folly for us to imitate or institute comparisons with the plans of "other denominations." We always lose by it. Our general organizations should be as truly the outgrowth of our principles as are our churches or local associations. The days of our greatest prosperity and usefulness have been those in which we were most purely and thoroughly Baptists. The work to be done consists of two kinds: first, that which can be done by individuals, or by the churches directly; second, that which can only be done, or be best done, by a society, or societies, intended to combine the efforts of all the churches. Our present business is with the latter class of labor.

Is there, then, any one kind or department of labor for the extension of the kingdom of Christ, which requires, or favors, a union of all Baptists, and of all our churches, in one general organization? If so, what is it? The organization must be founded on a principle which we all hold in common. Its object must be so simple, so definite, that every Baptist can understand it. There must be no room for doubt that it is approved of God. The principle must not be a doubtful one, nor of secondary importance, or partial application; it must be of paramount obligation to Baptists of all climes and ages; whose authority is acknowledged *semper, et ubique, et ab omnibus*. Have we such a principle on which we can organize for such an object? If we have, it is that laid down in the second sentence of this letter. It is THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE

BIBLE in the hands of the people ; it is the principle that has always made Baptists the antipodes of Rome. We have ever insisted on the claims of God's word to be the first ; we have charged the corruptions of Christianity on the error of giving priority to something else than the Holy Scriptures. We have said, Place the Bible in the hands of the people ; let the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth be given to all nations, tribes and tongues ; let it be the rule of faith to all churches ; let no one add to or take from its teaching.

I suppose, therefore, that the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures must always occupy the first place in the estimation of Baptists. And they cannot give priority to any other form of evangelical labor without a denial of their own fundamental principle. They, of all men, should honor that life-giving word which God "hath magnified above all His name." No other book, no preaching, however faithful, can be compared to that Holy Word, which is "perfect, converting the soul ;" which is "right, rejoicing the heart ;" which is "pure, enlightening the eyes ;" which is "clean, enduring forever ;" which is "true, and righteous altogether ;" which is "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold." Here, then, in our first principle is our bond of universal union. Here we can all be one. From north to south, from east to west, "from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof," we can all agree to give the word of God to the whole world.

Now let it be supposed that we had no existing organization at all for extending the Gospel, designed to unite the whole Baptist family ; and suppose we were considering what to fix upon, to unite us all in one work, would we, ought we, to unite in the work of disseminating the Bible ?



A first answer is, If we did not, we should deny our own first principle ; we should dishonor that word which we profess to reverence above all things, by giving preference to the word or the works of man. While professing to believe in the sufficiency of the Bible, we should in works deny that profession.

A second answer is, We should throw away our strongest and most vital bond of union ; the only one that can be relied upon to unite all our churches. We have no ecclesiastical bond, no canon law, but the living oracles ; we have neither pope nor bench of bishops, neither conference nor general assembly ; yet we need some bond of union that shall make us one people. And what can so surely, so beneficially do this, as a union for placing the precious word of life, which has so cheered and blessed us, in the hands of all our fellow men ? What can so unite our multitude of independent churches in one great army, as to give practical life and power to this, our only un-failing bond of union ? What watchword can touch the universal Baptist heart, like that of giving the Bible to the world ? Is there any other bond of union like this, to run like an electric wire through every heart in all our mighty host ?

A third answer is, That if we did not engage in this work, it would fall into unfaithful or incompetent hands. The manufacture of Bibles, in the English language, is chiefly in England, in establishments originally created by government monopolies. In the United States, the business is in the hands of the American Bible Society, and of private publishing houses. The Baptists do not wish to disturb the harmony of the English-speaking race in the use of the received version. But that race comprises only a small portion of the human family. Who shall supply the word of God to the countless millions who have not received it ?

We know that the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the American Bible Society, have refused to aid versions made by our missionaries, because they are, as we believe, fully translated. Should we leave the work of giving the Bible to the world to those who conceal a part of its truth?

A fourth answer is, The dissemination of the Bible is the most economical form of evangelical labor. The cost of supporting a single missionary would send out annually some thousands of Bibles. Such are the facilities furnished by the printing press for multiplying copies, and by the opening of the ports of nearly all nations to commercial intercourse, that we have great inducements to scatter the Bible broadcast over the world ; because, if one in ten falls into good ground, it is the most economical form of sending the bread of life to the perishing.

A fifth answer is, Baptists are the only people who can, or will, give the Bible, fully translated, to the heathen. Pedobaptists must conceal that part of the inspired volume which condemns their practices. This question has been brought to a practical issue, in the two great Bible Societies of Europe and America. There is, therefore, no alternative left us, but either to allow a mutilated Bible to go to the heathen, to allow our missionary translators to be compelled to conceal a part of God's word, and our principles to be insulted, or to engage, as a body, in the Bible cause.

But the question may still be asked: Suppose that we were now, for the first time, to devise a system of evangelical organizations best adapted to develop the spiritual life, and extend the influence and the efficiency of the American Baptists, would it be wise to organize a society for the Bible cause? Might not the Bible work be committed to some other society?

Very likely it might, if Baptists are prepared to take a lesson from Rome, and make the Bible cause secondary to some other. A board selected for some other work, might do the Bible work after some fashion. But, would this course be treating the word of God with that reverence which is its due? What work would Baptists place before that of giving God's word to the nations? If it is to be grafted on to some other, what shall the parent stem be? What is worthy to be the principal, if this is secondary? Would it not be more wise and more consistent, to engraft other branches of benevolent effort upon this? Is not the dissemination of the Bible the parent stem, by right, of all branches of evangelical labor? If Baptists build their churches on the Bible, shall they not build their system of united evangelical labor on the same foundation? If we are wise or consistent, we shall put the Bible cause foremost; we shall select a board with special reference to it, and then commit as many other trusts to their hands as we may deem them able to discharge with advantage. We are brought to the conclusion, then, that if Baptists had no general, united societies for the spread of the Gospel, they would first organize for the diffusion of the Bible. That they ought to do so, cannot admit of a doubt.

The work of translating, printing, and distributing the Bible is not a branch of preaching or teaching. It takes precedence of all other evangelizing agencies. It is the stem, the tap root of missions—foreign or domestic. It was by reading the Bible that Luther, and Wickliffe, and Tyndal, became converts, then translators, preachers, and reformers; it was by reading the Bible that Abdallah, the Arabian, became a Christian; it was by hearing it read that the first Greenlander was converted. The work of a Bible Society is to give the very words which

the Holy Ghost teacheth to the eye and to the ear of all the people and nations of men ; and, as a Baptist, I say, that we ought to have a Bible Society, if we have no other. Is it strange that Baptists cannot sustain a centralizing organization which rejects the central banner of their union ? If we do not make a Bible organization our rallying standard, then we have none. There can be no other common universally recognized bond of union to our multitude of churches. Reject our central idea, and we have no common centre.

I cannot stop now, brethren, to consider objections on the score of economies. We, Baptists, ought to be duly grateful that we have brethren who are considerate of our purses. One thing is certain, however : if American Baptists cannot sustain a Bible Society, then there cannot be one sustained and controlled by Baptists at all. I cannot divest myself of the idea, that the written word of the Most High God demands some special honor, even where we cannot reckon up the profit ; at least of a people who profess to hold it in so high reverence as we do. For one, I had rather run the risk of going too far, in doing honor to that word, than of falling short. The sons of Eli thought it poor economy, no doubt, to consume the fat of the people's sacrifices in burnt offerings to the Lord ; but God said, "them that honor me, I will honor ; but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." When I read in the pages of the Inspired Word those declarations of its surpassing excellence, which cannot be applied to any other book, nor to any other thing ; when I compare our professions of respect for the Bible with our practice in giving so much greater prominence to missions than to the Bible, I am led to ask, whether we are not obnoxious to the same reproof ; "wherefore honorest thou thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest



of all the offerings of Israel my people?" The Bible is to us the Ark of the Covenant and the Testimony ; it is between the Cherubim that overshadow the Mercy Seat ; it is the Shekinah, whose streaming rays come forth unveiled from the Holy of Holies. And shall we, who profess to reverence the Bible more than all others, who claim that its teachings have made us Baptists, who have no other sure bond of union,—shall we leave the Bible work to others? If we do, we shall deserve to be, as we shall be, the fag end of "the denominations ;" for then the glory will have departed from our Israel.

But we have not done our whole duty when we put the Bible into the hands of the people. It must be explained, advocated, defended, by the living voice, and by the written and printed page. We have the Divine sanction for both these methods. Both have their peculiar advantages. But, while it is admitted that the living voice of the living preacher has its advantages, while it is true that we have the precepts and examples of our Lord and of His Apostles to sanction the oral preaching of the Gospel, it is no less true that both Scripture and experience give special prominence to the written page. It has been thought by some that God revealed the art of writing, to men. The Law was given on "two tables of stone, written with the finger of God." And lest this most striking fact should not be remembered, it is repeated that "the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven with the finger of God." And when Moses broke these wonderful tables, he was commanded to hew out two others like them ; and God wrote on them the same words that were on the first. The people were commanded to write the laws on their door-posts, on their garments, and on the frontlets of their eyes. To the king of Israel this commandment was given :

“And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left; to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.”—Deut. 17: 18—20.

Our Lord appears to have commenced His public ministry by reading the Scriptures. He refuted the sophistries of Satan by saying, “It is written.” If this prominence was given to letters as the medium of preserving and disseminating religious truth, when the printing press was unknown—when copies were multiplied by the slow process of writing, ought we not to give corresponding prominence to the wonderful facilities furnished by the printing press? Then, only kings and priests could have the inspired volume; but Christians are all “kings and priests unto God.” Hence John, in vision, was commanded, “What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the churches.” And he wrote, “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear (if they could not read) the words of this prophecy.” The Bible is full of illustrations of the great advantages of the written over the oral method of disseminating knowledge, and of spreading Divine truth in the world. I think that there has been a tendency among us to exaggerate the comparative value of the oral over the printed message, in our evangelizing efforts. I think that we should consider carefully the question, whether we ought not to bestow a larger portion of our labors on the work of book-making and distribution.

But I will not stop to argue this point now, because I have another object in hand. viz: Which method of pub-

lishing the Gospel, (next to the circulation of the Bible,) the oral or the written, is most favorable to a general union of all our churches? The latter, I think. The object is to circulate, far and wide, books that advocate and defend the truth; and, if necessary, expose error. We have brethren of sufficient learning, judgment, wisdom, piety, and soundness in the faith, to prepare or to select such books as we can all agree to circulate. And a book once approved, stands approved. It does not depart from the faith, nor become apostate, as preachers sometimes do; it does not fall from grace, nor become proud, nor worldly, nor indolent, nor obstinate or refractory, as even missionaries are sometimes charged with doing. A good book does not require to be fed nor clothed, costs little for outfit and travelling expenses, is not liable to fall sick, nor to entail a family of helpless children on those who sent it forth. It never tires on its mission of light and love; it goes to the sick chamber, fearless of all contagion; it tells the same story to the rich as to the poor—to the prince as the peasant; it goes where no preacher can go, and gains access to places into which no missionary would be admitted. How many living missionaries could do the work that the silent pages of the *Pilgrim's Progress* is now doing, in the fifty languages in which it is read?

If the work of evangelizing the world were confined to the unlettered tribes, like the North American Indians, or the Bushmen of Africa, the case would be different. But the press has become the great power of the world. If we let it alone, it will not let us alone. It is a fearful engine for good or evil. There is, first, the irreligious press. It puts forth its baneful power in all lands where letters are known. It sends out books, tracts, magazines, and newspapers. They are read, and diffuse their poison

everywhere. They find an existing demand in the depravity of human nature. What is to counteract them? The commercial law of supply and demand? The Devil wants no better terms. If Christians will not combine to "lift up a standard against him," he is sure of success. Shall we be so ignorant of his devices as to give him this advantage?

Next comes the polite, fashionable literature,—the novels, the sensation books, the biographies of villany, books of travels, of art, and science, poetry and prose, the flashy newspapers and magazines, with which the press is teeming. Suppose that they are not hostile to religion, that they throw out no covert sneers, no slighting allusions, which is more than can be truly said. Suppose that they simply ignore the claims of Jesus, our Lord,—yet they come with all the charms of novelty, with all the attractions of style, with all the prestige that genius, and art, and fashion can invest them, to pre-occupy the mind, to absorb the thoughts, to vitiate the taste of the young, and banish religion from the circle of their influence. Shall we do nothing to counteract it? Shall we leave the law of supply and demand to create a taste for a thoroughly Christian literature?

A third class is the general religious literature, which advocates those Christian doctrines and duties that are commonly received, but omits others, which are essential to the completeness of the Kingdom of Christ. Thousands of such books are published, and we rejoice in all the good that they do. The issues of the American Tract Society, and of the American Sunday-school Union, are excellent in their place. But we all believe that they omit some of the truth taught in the Bible that our Lord requires to be taught, as essential to the completeness of His kingdom. Shall we leave that part of the Gospel



which even good men overlook, to the mercantile chances of supply and demand?

A fourth class of books, tracts, sermons, and essays, come from the various Pedobaptist presses, assailing our principles and practices, our church polity and ordinances, with all the power that talent, learning, prejudice and fashion can bring to bear upon them. A large part of the private publishing houses of the country are controlled by Pedobaptists, or by men of no religion, who always lean towards the side of wealth, fashion, and worldly influence. And it is a singular and suggestive fact, that a large part of the books of religious controversy are aimed at Baptists. Papists may teach priestly absolution and mariolatry, Episcopalians may teach baptismal regeneration and salvation by works, Unitarians may degrade the Son of God and profane the blood of the covenant, Universalists may promise Heaven to the wicked, though he add drunkenness to thirst, Campbellites may delude their votaries to expect the remission of sins in the water, but you shall find your staunch Puritans and Presbyterians, of all their jarring schools, spending more shafts on the Baptists than on all these errorists together! And why? What evil have we done, even on their own principles? Oh, we say, that "as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death, and therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." The head and front of our offending is, that we dare to carry out this truth. They admit the truth by inviting us to their communion, they illustrate their charity by abusing us for adhering to our principles, and their honesty by denouncing the very principles which they admit to be true! And if we do leave to Baptist private publishers the work of refuting these assaults, yet the Pedobaptists have in their societies a publishing capital

of not less than a million and a half of dollars, employed in printing and circulating a Pedobaptist literature. Shall Baptists let this mighty flood roll over the land unchecked? No! if they regard their principles as worth defending, if they believe that they have their Lord's commission to preach, embody and defend His Gospel, in its simplicity and completeness, they will be recreant to their trust, if they do not unite as one to employ the mighty energies of the press in its behalf. Error in books and tracts must be repelled by truth in books and tracts. And as Jesus did not wait for people to come and buy his truth, but "went about doing good," so we should carry that truth everywhere.

While, therefore, we ought to rejoice in all that private publishers are doing, and when we "pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers," should include in that prayer a petition for an increase of godly publishers and booksellers, yet Baptists should combine their strength to print and distribute books and tracts. If we had no society for this purpose, it would be our duty to form one forthwith, and to endow it liberally. Such a society, next to a Bible Society, is most favorable to a general union of all our churches. It is the second best common bond to preserve among our extended body the unity of the faith and unity of action. It is a cause of sufficient magnitude, and sufficiently distinct, to require the undivided energies of one society.

The other method of extending the Kingdom of Christ—that by means of oral preaching and teaching—differs from the other two in several important particulars. The object of sending out missionaries, that is, evangelists, whether into our own or a foreign country, is to raise up churches.\* This was our Lord's appointment. The Apos-

\* See Appendix, note A.

ties planted churches wherever they could, and these churches, made of baptized believers only, are called by the significant name of "*candlesticks*," or light-bearers to the world. A church is independent, though the missionary, or evangelist, around whom it is gathered, is its pastor or bishop. So far as we send out men to preach, we, of course, wish them to form churches. We wish to dot the world all over with independent, self-sustaining churches, all made up of baptized believers only, all "*candlesticks*" to the regions around them. Now, as to the relative importance of this department of labor for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, and the manner in which Baptists ought to combine to carry it on, there are several things to be remembered.

In the first place, It is necessarily expensive. A missionary, especially to a heathen people, must be a man of the highest order of intellect, learning, and piety. He should be a tried and proved man ; not only capable of defending the Gospel against the sophistries of heathenism, but one who can be trusted to lay the foundation of new churches, and be an example to the flocks thus gathered. To train up and support such men, must be expensive.

In the second place, There is a broad distinction between the work of an evangelist, or missionary, sent out to preach and to raise up churches, and a Bible translator or a book distributor. A good translator may be a very indifferent preacher, and a good preacher may be a very poor translator. A man might be quite competent to circulate the Bible, as well as to read and explain it, who would not be a suitable guide to the churches ; and a good missionary is rarely a good book distributor. The work belongs to different classes of men, and requires a different superintendence.

In the third place, There is no apostolic authority for

the modern division of missionary labor into home and foreign. Paul speaks of an arrangement by which James, Peter and John were to preach to the Jews, while he and Barnabas would go to the Gentiles. But even this division was not regarded ; for Peter first preached to the Gentiles, and Paul opened the Gospel message first to the Jews, wherever he went. But the division into foreign and home missions is a modern invention. A foreign mission society is but half a society ; and a home mission society is but half a society. "The field is the world." "Go ye into *all* the world," is the commission. And a Mission Board, competent to send evangelists to a foreign nation, must be still more competent to send laborers into the destitute portions of their own country. Nothing would be more likely to happen than that applicants for service in a foreign country, would be judged more suitable for home service.

In the fourth place, The work of sending out evangelists, either into our own or a foreign country, differs from the Bible and book work, in this : it is not possible, nor desirable, to unite the churches generally in one organization, to promote it. This work is partly ecclesiastical, partly fiscal. A missionary must be a member of some church ; his piety, call to the ministry, and fitness for his work, must have been approved by some church. He is amenable to the discipline of that church till he is dismissed from it, and received into another. Yet the Board that sends him forth gives him instructions, and thus he becomes accountable to two bodies. His conduct may be approved by his church, but disapproved by the Board. Then, if a Board is constituted by the concurrent authority of many churches, or of individual members of many churches, they are likely to set up different standards of qualifications, to have different theories, and irreconcilable



plans of missionary labor : then come up doctrinal questions, such as general atonement, or particular atonement, free will, election and the saints' perseverance, to say nothing of different opinions respecting polygamy, temperance, slavery, and other questions which might embarrass an extended society very greatly, though they would cause no trouble to a single church, or to a small cluster of churches. Possibly some of you, brethren, may recollect some illustrations from our experience in missionary operations.

In the fifth place, There are serious objections to the forming and endowing of a large society for the purpose of sending out missionary evangelists, especially into a foreign land. The management of such a society must, necessarily, fall into the hands of a few men, and as naturally remain in the same hands, from year to year. These few men have the power to appoint and discharge missionaries, and to fix the amount of their compensation, to instruct them what fields of labor to enter, or to leave, and to punish them for any disobedience to their orders. Yet, these missionaries are Baptist ministers, sent to become the pastors of independent churches, equal in official rank to their brethren at home ; and it is a conceded principle, that every preacher among us is left to his own responsibility to his Master, in choosing his field of labor. Yet, a foreign missionary must obey his instructions, on peril of being recalled, or of being deprived of his means of subsistence. I am not censuring, even by implication, anything that has been done to, or by, our foreign missionaries, but I ask, as a Baptist, is such a system right? I see very little danger in a society supported by every Baptist on the footstool, whose sole object is to give the Bible, the pure, unadulterated word of God, to the world : but I do see very grave objections

to a large centralizing society for the sending out of missionaries. With my present views, I could put myself under the control of no such society; I would have the same freedom abroad that I claim at home, or I would not go abroad; and if I could not be supposed to be as honest, as faithful to my Master's interests, and as judicious in respect to the manner of my labors abroad as my brethren at home, I would stay at home. I would send honest accounts of my labors to those who undertook to "hold the rope," while I went down into the dark well of heathenism, but I would labor according to my own convictions of duty respecting my Master's will. I would have this well understood, however, before I went, by those who undertook the burden of my support, and if I put myself under the orders of a board, I would obey them strictly, so long as I held a commission from them.

In the sixth place, The work of sending out missionary evangelists properly belongs to churches or to individuals. This seems to have been the way that churches were planted at the first. The order of events, after the mention of the church in Jerusalem, to which I have before alluded, is thus :

1. At that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles.  
—ACTS 8 : 1.

2. Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.—8 : 4.

3. Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.—9 : 31.

If we take these brief historic notices as intended to indicate the means by which these churches were planted, we find that it was not done by the Apostles, but by individuals who seem to have been laymen. Churches

sprung up as the fruit of the preaching of these fugitives from persecution, which must have consisted chiefly in a relation of the miracles, teaching and death of Jesus, with the proofs that He was the Messiah predicted by the prophets. If churches were planted by means so simple at that day, there can be no necessity for a great corporation to do it now. The true idea of a missionary evangelist is, one sent of the Lord. Whence did Baptists borrow the project of a great missionary corporation, to assume the support of the preachers of the Gospel to the heathen? Not of the Apostles, certainly; not of their own ecclesiastical principles. Paul had no such corporation to sustain him; but, on the contrary, the churches which he planted, instead of looking back to a board at Jerusalem for pecuniary aid, did just the reverse. "For," says Paul, "it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem; it hath pleased them, verily, and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in carnal things." These churches not only sustained the Apostle as their missionary, but felt that they were indebted to his countrymen also.

These facts show us what has been done by personal effort, guided by personal wisdom, impelled by personal faith and love. What has been done, can be done. Carey, the pioneer of modern missionaries to the East, made his own mission; he and his associates sustained themselves, not only devoting all that they received from England to the printing of the Scriptures and the support of other missionaries, but they contributed eighty thousand pounds sterling, from their own earnings, besides. Judson, the pioneer of American missionaries, with the aid of his associates, made his own mission, and called into being

the societies that sustained them. Solomon says, that "a man's gift maketh room for him." If the spirit and power of a missionary is not in a man, no society can put it there; if it is there, it will make itself known. I think that Baptists must see, from the nature of their principles as well as from their experience, that a great corporation, to assume the support and control of missionary evangelists, is exceedingly undesirable in itself. The work belongs to individuals and to churches; but a corporation for the purpose of supplying the world with the pure word of God is an entirely different thing.

Turning now to our existing societies for extending the kingdom of Christ, we find the Missionary Union, under its successive names and forms, to be the oldest; though foreign missions is not the earliest evangelizing enterprise of American Baptists. The Bible cause and domestic missions had received earlier attention.\* The conversion of Judson and Rice, united with the example of Carey and his associates, was the occasion of enlisting us in behalf of missions to India and the East. The influence of Judson on the course of our evangelizing labors has been very peculiar. He was not reared as one of us: he was our missionary, though unknown to us by face, almost a third of a century: the story of his patience in the most fearful sufferings, even to bonds and imprisonment, had connected him with the noble army of Confessors and Martyrs; the Memoir of his distinguished wife had taken the charm from the tales of romance, and the name of Judson, the hero missionary, the Apostle to Burmah, awakened emotions of pious admiration, second only to those of the heroic age of Christianity, or of Apostles who had sealed their testimony with their blood. His fame and his history were household words; his piety, zeal,

\* See Appendix, Note B.



and self-forgetting love for the perishing heathen—his serene faith, his meekness, patience, constancy, and eminent services, were themes of universal admiration. Money flowed like water at the mention of the name of Judson ; it became the watchword of societies for missionary inquiry by young men in their novitiate for the Christian ministry, many of whom committed themselves to the work of missions in India under very crude impressions of the nature of the work, some to labor very successfully many years, some to return disabled or dissatisfied, more to find an early grave.

An experiment of thirty years has taught us, that all who go to the East as missionaries do not become Judsons. Disagreements between the missionaries, and between them and the Board, have come to light ; murmurs of discontent from the missionaries have become louder and louder ; the relations of missionaries to the Board have been elaborately defined, over and over, yet they refused to stay defined, till at last, the pent up elements of discord, incapable of longer control, exploded in this city, to our unutterable mortification ; and the halo of mysterious sanctity around our Asiatic missions was, for a time, thoroughly dispelled. And they are now represented as enfeebled and flagging, if not in danger of utter extinction !

During the same period, our Foreign Mission organization has been the occasion of bickerings and divisions between the brethren at home. The General Missionary Convention, formed in May, 1814, was composed of Baptists from eleven States,—Rev. Dr. Furman, of South Carolina, being President ; Rev. Dr. Baldwin, of Massachusetts, Secretary. Gano and Semple, Bolles and Johnson, united as brethren of the same household of faith, in sending the bread of life to the perishing. But, after the lapse of years, sectional jealousies sprang up : political

questions, mixed up with questions relating to church fellowship, were thrown into missionary discussions; another basis of coöperation than a common faith in Christ and the institutions pertaining to His kingdom was insisted on,—till at last, the tie that bound the Baptist body in fraternal coöperation for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom was severed; not over a real, living, actual question of difference, but over a vacuum,—a mere hypothetical question! Next came the expedient to remedy the error with human wisdom, borrowed from the “denominations;” and the constitution of the Missionary Union, with its exclusive life-memberships, and its complicated “breakwaters,” came forth, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. No man could suppose, for a moment, that such a thing was the outgrowth of Baptist principles. How it came upon us, unless as a judicial visitation for our sins, it is difficult to tell. Constituted as if for eternal duration and growth, a few years have produced a general conviction that it is unscriptural, unbaptistic, not longer to be borne than it can safely be got rid of. Its history has been in singular contrast to its name, for disunion has marked its progress at every step.

What are the lessons from all this? Is it not time to inquire whether our plans for conducting foreign missions are not radically erroneous? Whether a great corporation, to take the control of all our missions, is desirable? Whether it does not embody a principle necessarily of dangerous and of evil tendency to our churches and to our missions? Whether foreign missionaries should not be *tried men*, able and worthy to sustain a large share of personal responsibility, enjoying the same freedom of action that we all claim as our birthright? Whether the troubles of our foreign missions are not the necessary consequence of our errors? Whether in our labors for the extension

of the Redeemer's kingdom, we have not given undue prominence to the sending of evangelists among the decaying tribes of eastern Asia? Whether the troubles which are supposed to beset our other evangelizing organizations do not really grow out of our mistaken and vacillating policy in regard to foreign missions? And whether that department of our labors for extending the kingdom of Christ, is not chiefly or wholly obnoxious to the charges of expensiveness and of dangerous centralization of power?

I write with freedom, brethren, because I know that you will not suspect me of indifference to the cause of foreign missions. If, instead of contending so earnestly for the salvation of the Union as to render it doubtful whether it is worth saving, we should coolly "calculate the value of the Union" as a help to the mission cause, would it not be quite as well? As to home missions, the constitution of the Missionary Union declares that the *whole world* is its field; though, like the Bishoprics of our Episcopal neighbors, it allows some other societies to nestle under its wing. The Home Mission Society has done a good work, and has a great work yet to do, in the new settlements of the West, which it could do to better advantage if removed nearer to the field of its operations.

The American Baptist Publication Society, the next in age to the Missionary Union, was formed for the purpose of originating and circulating a Sunday-school and general literature, such as we need and could expect from no other source. Its object is, not merely "to increase the number of valuable religious books," but to increase and put in circulation books that teach important truth, which is left out of many valuable religious books. We have in our churches and congregations some five millions of people to

instruct and strengthen in Baptist principles, and all the world beside to convert to those principles. A literature adequate to this work must be immense, requiring all that private publishers can do, in addition to the society. It has been said, that "if a book will be read, it will pay for itself; if it will not be read, there is no object in publishing it." This, if true, is a sweeping truth. Thus: if preaching will be heard, it will pay for itself; if it will not be heard, there is no object in preaching. If a college is wanted, it will pay for itself; if it is not wanted, there is no object in founding it. If people desire salvation, they will come for it; if they do not desire it, there is no object in sending it to them. If this doctrine were true, it would make short work with all our societies, for they would be expensive and complicated, with a vengeance! But it is not true. Thousands of books are read because they are put in people's way. They make a market for themselves and for other books, because they are thrust into the market. When truth becomes as popular in the market as error now is, the above aphorism will be true, but not till then.\*

Of this society, Professor Knowles said, more than twenty years ago, it "has from its commencement had a strong hold on our regard. . . . We hope that this important society will receive a more vigorous and extensive patronage. It may be made a powerful instrument in promoting the cause of truth. It has a strong claim on every American Baptist. Let us be true to our principles."† Its founder was his intimate friend. Its object is, not to diffuse a merely controversial literature, but a literature which Baptists can safely admit to their Sabbath-schools, and to their firesides, and put into the hands of inquirers and gainsayers. Its business pays its way;

\* See Appendix, Note C.

† See Christian Review, for Sept., 1836.



its capital is wholly employed in its business, which pays all the expenses of its officers and agents. It should receive, at the earliest possible moment, a working capital of one hundred thousand dollars, to be actively employed in manufacturing and disseminating books. There is, perhaps, no other way in which that amount of money can be more usefully or economically appropriated by those who love our principles. A building fund is already provided for by the munificence of a few brethren in Philadelphia. Let the Society have a sufficient working capital, let it be vigorously and skilfully conducted, and the result will be a great increase of the number and the business of our private publishing houses.\*

The American and Foreign Bible Society was formed in consequence of the refusal of the American Bible Society to aid the translations made by our foreign missionaries. The necessity and propriety of the measure was concurred in by one of the largest Baptist conventions ever held. It was not greatly to our credit, professing, as we do, to build our churches on the Bible, unmingled with traditions, that we did not organize a Bible Society till compelled to do so, or to allow our translators to be hampered with traditionary rules, and our principles to be insulted. But it is to the honor of the noble and true-hearted Baptists who saw the alternative, that they resolved to give a pure and complete Bible to "ALL LANDS," making the whole world the field of our operations.

The Society has had a chequered history. By the course of some of its officers—which I can never cease to lament, while I shall ever love them as brethren—its usefulness was, for a time, impaired; but, standing on its original

\* I am saved the labor of saying much in behalf of the Publication Society, because it has spoken so ably for itself. See the very interesting "History of the American Baptist Publication Society, from 1824 to 1856," by Rev. J. Newton Brown, D. D. Also a tract, "Principles and Purposes of the A. B. P. Soc."

principle, it has stood its ground between two classes of opponents, one insisting on making the English version the standard of all translations, the other on displacing that translation by a revised version.

The Society is now an existing fact; it has a name, a charter, a history, a noble house of its own; it has valuable legacies in hand and in prospect; it has strong friends, liberal donors and praying hearts, all over the land, who love its objects and its work. It has encountered furious gales, from opposite quarters, but it has passed the rocks and the quicksands, and now looks forward to the work of supplying the SEVEN OR EIGHT HUNDRED MILLIONS who are yet destitute of the word of Life.\*

Now, brethren, is it true that there are Baptists who wish to put out the light of their only Bible Society on earth? to throw away the results of twenty years of labor and sacrifice? to make the dissemination of God's word a secondary thing, or a branch of some other work? What will the world say to our claim that we are specially *Bible* Christians; that "we are not as many, who corrupt the word of God;" that we are the unflinching adherents of faithful versions,—when they ask what we are doing to give that precious volume which we claim to prize so highly, and to follow so explicitly, to the world, and we are obliged to answer that, as a body, we are doing nothing? That we leave that work to Pedobaptists! while we, following in the steps of Rome, give our whole strength to "oral communication" under strict human control!

I know not how you look at some of the straws of opinion among us, brethren, but when I hear Baptists talking of the danger or the difficulties of our centralizing around the Bible, but see no danger in centralizing around

\* See Appendix, Note D.

a board of absolute control over their brethren in the ministry, I tremble for the integrity and perpetuity of our churches. If the American Baptists cannot sustain a Bible Society, then there cannot be such a Society on the footstool as they insist is needed : and if we cannot sustain a Bible Society, we cannot, ought not, to sustain any Society whatever outside of our churches ! The field for Bible work is opening and extending daily. Since the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804, no less than sixty millions of copies of the Scriptures have been circulated by that and the other European and American Bible Societies. Now, the millions of China and Japan are becoming accessible to Bible distribution. The abolition of serfdom in the great Russian empire is another sign of the times. There has never been a period when such openings for Bible work were so great as now.\*

Instead of contracting our Bible operations, they should be greatly increased. We owe it to the God of the Bible, we owe it to the millions perishing for the bread of life, we owe it to ourselves, to our principles, to engage with fresh zeal in the work. Doubtless it will cost us something, perhaps "more than three hundred pence," to honor the Bible as it deserves, but I think it requires neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet to foresee the two evils that will come upon us if we could be so infatuated as to give up our Bible Society. Whatever we may "simplify," let us not so "simplify" ourselves as to bring two costly evils, to save the expense of doing good. I verily believe it will cost much less to sustain the American and Foreign Bible Society liberally, than to support what we will have to support, if we could be so infatuated as to relinquish it. Let him that hath wisdom count the number.

\* See Appendix, Note E.

Here, then, are three divisions of labor to extend our Redeemer's kingdom: *The Bible for the world; books to explain it, for the world; living preachers for the world;* all for the same purpose, to raise up the golden candlesticks that shall bear the light to all people. God hasten on the day that "we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

This seems to me to be on the true principle of the division of labor, which is one of the grand conditions of success. We have Apostolic precept and example for such division in our labors for extending the kingdom of Christ. But what is the principle of division? Into home and foreign missions, making Bible and book work to be parts of these, respectively? I find neither Scripture nor experience for this. The true division of labor is according to its *kind*. To this agrees the voice of the Apostle: "Having, then, gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith, or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth on teaching, or he that exhorteth on exhortation," &c. If some of our brethren have gifts for Bible work, some for book and tract work, others for the work of preaching, as we know they have, let each make the most of his gift. But to divide the work of extending the Kingdom of Christ between foreign and home missions, a division which neither the Scriptures, nor experience, nor analogy teaches, which the constitutions of our societies reject, seems to me very much like dissecting with a cross-cut saw, regardless of bones, joints, muscles, veins, or viscera!\*

The objection that has been brought against our societies that they are complicated and interfering with each

\* See Appendix, Note F.

other, appears to rest on a radical error respecting the proper division of labor. Suppose that a Bible reader and distributor, a book colporteur, and a missionary evangelist, are all operating on the same territory. The business of one is to put the Bible into the hands of the people, and get them to read it, or read it to them. The work of the book colporteur is, to supply all the families with suitable reading, to find what books are read, what forms of error prevail, and to apply the corrective. The evangelist is to preach, to gather the converts into churches, to make full proof of his ministry. Now it seems to me, that here is the same sort of complication and interference that there is between the architect, the bricklayer, and the carpenter, in the erection of a building. They are "all doing the same work," i. e., building the house. There is as much complication and interference between the builders as those classes of laborers. Let him that ministers wait on his ministry, the colporteur on his colportage, the Bible distributor on his Bible work. Experience proves, that it is a mistaken policy to employ evangelists in colportage, or colporteurs in building churches. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, is a homely adage, which, in a free translation, may mean, "It is a pity to spoil a good deacon to make a poor minister." The agency work of these three operations must be divided on the same principle. It might as well be said, that the rays of the sun, moon and stars are complicated and interfering with each other; that rain, heat and sunshine, or that our churches, colleges and newspapers, interfere with each other, as that agents for these three classes of labor interfere with each other.\*

Our societies are charged with being expensive. I pause, brethren, at this charge. Who has the right to bring such an indiscriminate accusation, publicly, against

\* See Appendix, Note G.



societies maintained by the free-will offerings of Baptists? Has any one been taxed against his will, beyond his ability? If so, let him speak, and it shall be recompensed to him again. But what, I ask, is the effect of this indefinite charge? Not to hinder the liberal, intelligent friends of the societies from giving. No. It affects only the penurious, the distrustful, the grudging, who want an excuse for not giving, and to throw the whole burden on on those who give freely. Such charges are cruel: they inflict a gratuitous wrong. Will any one say that our societies cost more than the good they do is worth?

Or does the charge of expensiveness mean, that our societies are expensive compared with those of "other denominations?" If the charge is founded on this standard of comparison, what is it but that it is too expensive to *be* Baptists? It is quite likely that we might save money by ceasing to be Baptists at all. The founders of Rhode Island might have saved much money and suffering by quietly ignoring their principles. The early Baptists of Massachusetts might have saved their money and their skins by the same prudent course. It is probable, too, that by copying the systems which some of "the denominations" are writhing under, and striving to throw off, we might make a saving of money. It does cost something to be a Baptist, worthy of the name; but if any of my brethren think that it costs too much, I hope that they will say as little about it as possible.

But we have been told, that a great saving of expense might be made by giving all the foreign work to the Foreign Missionary Society, and all the home work to the Home Missionary Society, and that these societies would have the funds to do it, if we would only furnish them for the purpose. Unquestionably. And we have been pointed to the very *economical* manner in which Methodists and Pres-



byterians, and "other denominations," raise their funds, and educate their ministers, &c. Well, this is an age of discoveries, and, like my brethren, I have an ambition that way. We want to do the Lord's work in the cheapest way, of course. Here is a city church: the cost of its house of worship, with the ground it stands on, must be put down at \$100,000. There is \$7,000 annual cost. The pastor's salary is \$3,000; sexton, \$1,000; singing, \$1,000; fuel, repairs and incidentals, say \$1,000; making *thirteen thousand dollars* annual expense. The cost of ten such churches is one hundred and thirty thousand dollars annually! And in ten years they cost one million three hundred thousand dollars!! And how many have been added by baptism in that time above the exclusions? Suppose six hundred and fifty. Then these converts have cost "the denomination" two thousand dollars a head!! But by a collection of statistics out West, it is found to cost less than five dollars a convert! What is plainer than that those churches should be consolidated, or simplified, or reduced in number forthwith?

Then, as to our general evangelizing societies, we need only one, for Bibles, books, and missionary work, for the whole world. We shall need but one Treasurer, one Board, and one set of rooms. All agencies can be dispensed with, not a cent, beyond the cost of postage, and exchange on drafts, need to be paid for collecting. The whole can go into the field of benevolence. Every missionary shall be a colporteur and Bible distributor, so that a dollar from each Baptist will give a million of dollars annually to the work. If it be said that such a society has not the funds for all this work, the answer is apparent: it would have them, if we would all unite to give them. Lest it should not occur to you, brethren, I will just add, that it might be found expedient to place me at

the helm of this invention for economizing benevolence; and then, if all will do as they are directed, the machinery will move without "friction." We would have but one Theological Seminary, making a clean saving of seventy-five per cent. there. It is true, Baptists would have to become a slightly different sort of people from what they are, but that is implied in all the proposed improvements. "If any man think me a fool," in proposing such changes, I will only say with the Apostle, "as a fool receive me: for ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise."

Complaints are also made of the cost of agents. But what is the standard of comparison? Is an agent to be put on a footing with a broker, or a commission merchant? Is the value of his services to be reckoned by the percentage of his collections and expenses? Or, is he an honored servant of Christ, separated to the special work of enlisting his brethren in a specific branch of benevolence? Is he to aim solely, or chiefly, at raising money? Is that the only object in sending him out? Have we scriptural authority for sending out agents at all, to solicit funds to be used for objects outside of the churches that contribute them? Let us see what light the Scriptures throw on these points:

1. *Giving is a Christian Grace.*

"Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this GRACE also."—2 Cor. 8 : 7.

2. *Motive to its exercise.*

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."—9th verse.

3. *The Rule in Giving.*

"Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—9 : 7.

4. *The first Agent a Volunteer.*

"Thanks be to God, who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you: for indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you."—8 : 16, 17.

5. *Another Agent appointed by the Apostle.*

"And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches; and not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord."—8: 18, 19.

6. *The third Agent, and his Character.*

"And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you."—8: 22.

7. *Reason for Sending these Agents.*

"Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not of covetousness."—9: 5.

8. *The Agent's Rank and Dignity.*

"Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you; or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ."—8: 23.

9. *The Blessed Results of this Agency.*

"For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God."—9: 12.

Let our agents be put on this elevated platform; let them be the wisest and holiest of our ministers; let them be commissioned to awaken, unite, and give system to the work of giving; let them aim, specially, to cultivate the *grace* of giving; let their salaries *never* be brought into a mercenary comparison with the amounts that they collect, nay, let them, as a rule, avoid taking collections, but hold up "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," and rejoice if the fruit is "abundant by many thanksgivings to God." In order to do his work to the best advantage, the agent should have one specific object, with which he should be so familiar that he can present it clearly and strongly.\*

In order that our threefold system of evangelizing organizations may be effective, they must be the true expression of our principles, they must have the confidence of our brotherhood, and receive our united, earnest support. The lessons of Scripture and experience must be

\* See Appendix, Note H.

carefully studied, and rash changes avoided. We must learn not to despise the day of small things; we must not make disparaging comparisons, nor charges of expensiveness, nor apply such unworthy phrases as "*machinery*" and "*cost of friction*" to our plans for extending our Master's kingdom. Would Paul apply such debasing epithets to the work of brethren whom he called "the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ?" Let us feel the dignity of our labor; let us remember that the greatest man among us is he who makes himself the servant of all. Let us not be so forward to steady the Ark of God as to dry up the resources of our societies in order to force them to a change. Let our Boards, Secretaries, Agents, Pastors, and Editors, all use their power "for edification and not for destruction."

It is more agreeable to the flesh to boast of our principles than to be living examples of their worth. They are suited to the wise, not to the rash and unskilful. Our churches are not democracies, as they are sometimes heedlessly called; they are Christocracies, because Jesus Christ is their Supreme Ruler; they are Bibliocracies, because the written word is their supreme law. It is their glory that they are made up, largely, of the common people; yet in them the most gifted minds find their noblest scope. The reputation of our churches should be cherished with tender care, for they need the influence of thoughtful men, who will judge of our principles very much by the success of our general evangelizing organizations. If they see that we fail in our plans of united labor, that we are ever pulling down what we have built, and rooting up what we have planted; now laying the foundation of a missionary society, as if for endless duration and growth, then rushing to the opposite extreme of abolishing all but our most primary organizations; now uniting in foreign missions, as brethren of the same faith,



then dividing on abstractions and hypotheses ; now forming a society with great zeal, then, when it is well begun, and our ability has doubled, discovering that we are not able to carry it on ; one day decrying ecclesiastical domination, then getting up a convention of churches to exercise the very same power that we have condemned in others ; one year preaching the importance of a division of labor in our evangelizing agencies, then going about to simplify, consolidate, and reduce their number,—will they not conclude, that however true our principles may be in the abstract, yet in practice they cannot be trusted ? And will they not come to this conclusion with reason, if they see us unable to unite in the work of giving the uncorrupted word of God to the nations ?

But I am not willing to admit that our principles lead to confusion and division. I do rejoice that we cannot sustain a centralizing organization to concentrate ecclesiastical power in a few hands ; I rejoice that there is an underlying spirit among us, that will, sooner or later, topple over all such human devices. When our principles broke forth from centuries of captivity in the land of the Philistines, they were like blind Samson feeling for the pillars. Our fathers engaged in such forms of labor as they could. We have the light of all their experience, prosperous and adverse. From it we can surely learn that God has called us to labor for the conversion of the Heathen to Christ ; but not by adopting the policy of Rome. His providence has confirmed the truth that Baptists have one, and but one, universal, unfailing bond of union,—the sufficiency of the Bible—the duty of giving the Bible to all people. This must have the first place ; it demands the assent, and the aid of all. This work has no dangerous tendencies ; it is scarcely possible to do too much of it.

As to Foreign Missions, I am glad to see the indications

that a change of measures is demanded.\* If the diseased constitution of the Union can be healed of its congenital maladies, without destroying the patient's life, it will be a cause of rejoicing. I hope that some of your churches, brethren, located in the intelligent and wealthy city of New York, will have their missionaries in heathen lands, sustained by your own contributions, rendering their accounts of services to you, and under no earthly guidance but yours. I hope that there may be found among you young men ready to go and preach Christ to the heathen, under your auspices. Let the work of missions be stripped of that coloring of romance which distance and novelty lend to it; let it rest directly on the hearts and hands of God's people, on individuals and churches; and, instead of being a source of discord, it will not only bless the heathen, but will be "abundant, also, in many thanksgivings unto God." But let those who cannot, or do not, choose to do this, give liberal aid to the Missionary Union.

I submit these thoughts for your consideration, brethren, with all deference and humility. They broach no new theories, propose no revolutions, seek no personal ends, echo the sentiments of no faction, advocate no interests nor measures except those which belong to the kingdom of our common Lord. I long to see the great body of American Baptists arising to a true comprehension of the greatness of the work before them, and of their unparalleled advantages for extending that kingdom. I want to see our great Baptist family one in spirit, in love, in labor, as they are one in principle. We are able to do—stop!—there is One who "is able to do EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY, above all that we ask or think, according to *the power that worketh in us.*" Is that power now working in us to persuade a million of Baptists to contract their

\* See Appendix, Note I.



plans, and to begin that contraction by abandoning the work of giving God's word to the world? Have we forgot that the measure of our success is the measure of our faith? When I remember that Carey attempted the conversion of India, as his reverend satirist said, with "a collection of thirteen pounds, ten shillings and sixpence," taking for his motto, "Attempt great things for God—expect great things from God;"—when I read the story of his toils, the obstacles he encountered, the wonders he achieved, under the inspiring power of that faith, I look around to see who will follow up the work so nobly begun. Is the spirit of Carey and of Judson still among us? It seems to me, brethren, that what we now specially need, is CONFIDENCE;—confidence in God, confidence in his word, confidence in our principles, confidence in our brethren, confidence in each other; tempered with the meekness of wisdom. We have provoked one another long enough with imaginary complaints; let us now "consider one another to provoke to love and to good works." I propose that we have but one strife for the next ten years, that strife to be; who will do the most and complain the least; who will give most liberally, with the least dictation; who will be first to yield and last to complain; who will be most considerate of his brethren; who will humble himself to be, like his Master, "as one that serveth." I do not know that he who does this will be "accounted the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven," in its present imperfect state, but he will be the greatest when we come to see as we are seen, and to know as we are known.

Yours in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,

WILLIAM CROWELL.

NEW YORK, May 4, 1859.

## APPENDIX.

---

### NOTE A. See Page 22.

That this was the Apostolic plan will not be doubted. But the Constitution of the American Baptist Missionary Union declares: "Art. 2. The SINGLE OBJECT of this Union shall be *to diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ* by means of missions throughout the world." If that be its "*single object*," then the planting of churches is no part of its object; unless it is impossible "*to diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ*" without planting churches, which no one will pretend. If the word "*single*" had been left out, the forming of churches would not be the object of the Union; but the insertion of that word fixes its meaning beyond doubt.

If it be said that the planting of churches is usually understood to be a part of missions, that is admitted; and so is teaching school, writing books, translating the Scriptures, compiling dictionaries, distributing books and tracts, building houses, and buying compounds, understood to be a part of missions. But the language of this article restricts missions to the single object of diffusing the *knowledge* of the religion of Christ.

But the Report of the Union for 1853 presents an instructive commentary on the meaning of this article. That Report says, "The Constitution of the Missionary Union declares, that 'the single object of this Union shall be, to diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ by means of *missions*;'—regularly organized, and sustaining joint responsibilities, rather than by means of *missionaries*." If this be the meaning of the Article, then a "mission" is an "organization," whose "single object" is "to diffuse the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ." Is this the Baptist, or the New Testament idea of missions?

### § NOTE B. See Page 28.

As early as 1804-5, a collection, amounting to seven hundred pounds sterling, was made in this country, to assist Dr. Carey in the printing and distributing of Bibles in India. Rev. Dr. Stoughton, who was personally acquainted with Fuller and Carey, and who was a life-long correspondent of both, was active in making this collection, in which they were generously aided by Robert Ralston, Esq., of Philadelphia, and by Captain Wickes, in whose ship Dr. Marshman and his associates sailed to India, in 1799.

In the year 1812, the same year that the Congregationalist missionaries, Judsen and his associates, sailed on a mission to the East, a society was formed at Salem, Mass., called "THE SALEM BIBLE TRANSLATION AND FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY," the second article of whose Constitution was as follows:

"The object of this Society shall be, to raise money to aid the translation of the Scriptures into the Eastern languages, at present going on at Serampore, under the superintendence of Dr. William Carey, or, if deemed advisable at any time, to assist in sending a Missionary, or Missionaries, from this country to India."

The same object had been commended, by the Boston Association of Ministers, to their congregations, in November, 1811. The "Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society," for domestic missions, was formed in 1802.

### NOTE C. See Page 32.

It is easy to find theoretical objections to any form of benevolent effort. Most of the objections that have been brought against our Publication Society seem to me to arise from misapprehension. Its special object is *not* to supply an exist-

ing demand, but to *create* a demand for books which ought to be read, and will be read, if proper effort is made to bring them before the people; but which will not be, if left to the operation of the laws of trade. To doubt this is to impugn the wisdom of ages—to condemn all such organizations as the American Tract Society. Private publishers *follow*, the Society is to *lead* the market.

There is a great and increasing call for a Sunday-school literature, to supply libraries to our Sunday-schools, especially at the South and West. The books to meet this demand have hitherto been obtained, chiefly, from the American Sunday-school Union. They are, for the most part, excellent; but do they teach *all* that the New Testament teaches? Are we willing to have the two or three millions of children belonging to our communities, grow up under the impression that our distinctive principles and practices are not sufficiently *respectable* to be alluded to in the books which they read? They find no lack of books which describe the beauties of *christening*, the falling of the pearly drops on the face of angelic infancy, the feelings of the young mother when she offers up her first-born, and all the appeals that can arouse the feelings and enlist the sympathies in behalf of a pernicious error. Shall we allow such books to make their impressions on the young mind, without any thing to counteract them?

Then our churches, all over the West, are calling for books, which they can safely put into the hands of all their members, which can be admitted to their families without reserve, and which can be commended of all, as safe guides to a knowledge of our principles. Baptists have the ability to create and put in circulation a most effective literature, for old and young, for friends and opponents, and they owe it to themselves and to the cause of their Master, to provide a literature which shall show to their children and to the world, that they are not ashamed of their religion nor of their name.

The Society has issued over three hundred millions of pages of Gospel truth, advocating in due proportion those distinguishing principles of our faith which are excluded from the publications of other societies. Here is a summary of

THE SOCIETY'S BENEVOLENT WORK FOR SEVEN YEARS, AND ITS COST.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Weeks of labor, . . . . .   | 10,207      |
| Miles travelled, . . . . .  | 363,922     |
| Number of volumes sold by colporteurs, . . . . .  | 167,580     |
| Number of volumes given to the poor by colporteurs, . . . . .   | 17,096      |
| Pages of tracts given away by colporteurs, . . . . .  | 2,139,516   |
| Sermons preached, . . . . .   | 18,995      |
| Prayer-meetings held, . . . . .   | 10,611      |
| Addresses made, . . . . .   | 364         |
| Religious visits made in families, . . . . .  | 295,469     |
| Religious visits made in vessels, . . . . .   | 17,982      |
| Persons baptized, . . . . .   | 4,129       |
| Families found without the Bible, . . . . .   | 7,041       |
| Sunday-schools organized by colporteurs, . . . . .  | 246         |
| Libraries given to poor Sunday-schools, . . . . .   | 212         |
| Churches constituted, . . . . .   | 103         |
| Libraries granted to poor ministers, . . . . .  | 161         |
| Value of grants made at the rooms, in addition to the above libraries<br>and grants by colporteurs, . . . . . | \$5,090 83  |
| The entire cost of all the above work and grants is . . . . .   | 93,342 57   |
| Of this amount the churches have furnished . . . . .  | \$73,894 56 |
| The business has loaned . . . . .   | 3,943 54    |
| The business has given from itself . . . . .  | 15,504 47   |
|   | <hr/>       |
|   | \$93,342 57 |

## NOTE D. See Page 34.

As to the extent of the work yet to be done, to supply the word of God to the world, let these facts be considered: at the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1804, it was supposed that about four millions of Bibles had been circulated in the world since the invention of the art of printing. This would be about four Bibles to every 1000 people.

Since that time nearly sixty millions of copies have been circulated. Computing the present population of the earth at eleven hundred and thirty millions not more than from one-tenth to one-twentieth of earth's millions have yet received God's greatest gift to man! What a work is before us, to supply them with the Bible!

## NOTE E. See Page 35.

Although the American and Foreign Bible Society has been taunted by Pedobaptists with having been "born in a storm," and though some misguided Baptists have surrounded its early years with storms, yet it has done a good work, for which millions will call it blessed when time shall be no more. It has put into circulation 592,278 copies of the Holy Scriptures, in this country; 515,358 in Germany, under the direction of Mr. Oneken; and half a million in India.

The Society has aided in printing and circulating the Scriptures in about fifty languages and dialects.

The Society has appropriated \$106,750 63 to the Bible work in Europe and Africa; \$2,546 50 to the work among the American Indians, and large sums to assist the Chinese, Karen, and Calcutta missionaries in their Bible work.

The Society has made appropriations to the amount of \$49,862 00 to aid the English Baptist missionaries in the work of printing the Scriptures, and since its organization, has made grants to the Missionary Union, to aid the translations of their missionaries, and the amount of \$172,253 72. Now, is there any reason to suppose that it has diminished the receipts of the Union from its own direct collections? The foreign mission cause has been much more liberally sustained since this Society commenced its operations than before. That which is raised for the Bible work is not deducted from the resources of any other society. It has a hold on the hearts of the people which no other cause has, or can have. There are thousands of Baptists who will give to circulate the Bible, who will not give to the cause of foreign missions.

## NOTE F. See Page 36.

On this point I find some excellent thoughts from the pen of one of our most judicious friends of missions, in the Minutes of the Monroe, N. Y., Association, for 1853. After a brief consideration of the question "Have we too many societies?" the writer proceeds:

"Are the objects wrought by either of our great national societies unworthy? This will not be affirmed of course by any who contribute to their support. If it be assumed that these ends are worthy, can they be reached more readily or certainly by consolidation than by the existing modes of action? Division of labor is a universal law of success. The more perfect the organization, the more closely must it be regarded. The consolidation of all our societies would not supersede the necessity of its application. In case all our benevolent enterprises were intrusted to one great board of managers, they could not be successfully prosecuted except by committing the business of the departments, which are in their nature distinct, to separate bureaus, sub-boards, or committees. This system would require for its efficient working separate accounts, records, correspondence, and modes of administration. It would also require secretaries, treasurers, &c., at the head of each, together with separate rooms and contingent expenses. The Committee does not see that, even in the matter of agencies, any advantages would be gained.



"The claims of these departments of action are distinct and various,—education of the ministry, foreign missions, publication of denominational books,—and each requires for its efficient presentation an acquaintance with its own peculiar field of facts and arguments. No one man can at the same time master them all—much less could he present them all at once or at different times in an effective way. His statements would necessarily be vague, inadequate, and unexciting. By attempting to cover the whole ground, he would in reality cover none. The amount of benevolent contribution depends so much upon the legitimate excitation of the impulses of the heart, that the chances would be that an agent attempting to present the claims of three or four different objects at the same time, would in point of fact collect little more funds for all combined than he would for any one department which he thoroughly understood, and eloquently and clearly presented. A succession of such well-instructed and single-minded agents will, each in his turn, interest and instruct the same congregation, and each in his turn receive a liberal contribution. To perform the work of an agent efficiently, requires special study and preparation. The people need instruction, they need facts and arguments, such as do not lie on the surface. Commonplace arguments and ill-digested and scanty facts are easily presented by a versatile and ready mind, but such influences will never arouse the intellect or soften the heart. No great moral movement can be carried on with such a propelling power. We believe that practically an attempt at consolidation would sooner or later result in a substantial return to the present system of divided labor.

"The benevolent operations of the Southern Baptists are nominally under one organization, but practically they have felt the necessity of dividing the labor among four distinct Boards, fixed in four separate cities, each with its secretary, treasurer, agencies, and machinery. We believe that any attempt at consolidation among our benevolent bodies at the North would by necessity lead to the same result as at the South. We believe that the division of labor in collecting and disbursing funds for the varying purposes of benevolence is necessary, and arises out of the very nature of the case. To do one thing at a time is a dictate of common sense. It is equally requisite for efficient action that one man should be set to do one kind of work. Concentration of effort upon specific objects is the secret of the gigantic results of modern secular enterprise. It is equally applicable in the work of God: 'This one thing I do,' was the key to the power of Paul. It contains a principle of universal application.

"Again, the general control of such an immense organization would necessarily pass into the hands of one small Board, liable to be influenced in their decisions by a single powerful will. On the supposition that all the machinery would remain nearly as at present, an immense power of controlling and shaking public opinion would be put into the hands of a very few men, or practically, perhaps, into the hands of one.

"Human nature is the same in one body as in every other, and such a concentration of power, with the control of the press, agencies, and other means of influence, would receive additional force from the very sacredness of the interests intrusted to its care. We hesitate to jostle any organization, if by so doing we peril the interests of an object so important as the continuous preaching of the Gospel, or sustaining its concomitant labors. Thus, a hierarchy in all but the name might be consolidated in the bosom of the most democratic body in the world. The germ of the Roman hierarchy is found in the supreme control (gradually assumed and usurped) of a gigantic missionary and charitable organization. The concentration of power in the Methodist body, controlling and directing all the great religious movements of the membership, is an example in point. Concentration is contrary to the genius of republicanism and of the Baptist church polity. If all our organizations were united in one body, they would of necessity be in one place. This would give an immense preponderance of influence to whatever portion of the country should be selected for this purpose. The controlling power of our different societies is in different places, and intrusted to different

men. They thus operate as checks and balances on each other, and secure the churches against a centralization which might peril the dearest interests of religion."

NOTE G. See Page 37.

It has been supposed that the *colporteur* work of the American and Foreign Bible Society was an interference with the work of other societies. Even Dr. Wayland has fallen into this error. He says :

"The Publication Society employs itself in *colporteur* labor, and makes this the strong ground of its solicitation. The American and Foreign Bible Society has entered, to the full extent of its power, into the same work, and it also puts forward its claims on precisely the same ground."

On this error, many of the objections to the operations of our societies are built. But the *colporteur* work of the American and Foreign Bible Society bears scarcely any resemblance to that of the Publication Society: it is a distinct and peculiar work, not entered upon by any other society. The mistake has arisen from the use of the word *colporteur*. To avoid mistakes in future, the word *Bible-reading Colporteurs* has been adopted. The work is thus defined in the printed rules of the Society, viz: "To circulate the word of God by reading it from house to house among those who do not attend public evangelical worship." The system has the following features:

1. The work is not preaching, nor book peddling; it is BIBLE READING in private houses, especially of Catholics, who cannot read, or if they could, would not be allowed to have the Bible.

2. It takes no pastor from his work, for it employs plain, pious, humble men; Irish for the Irish, Germans for the Germans, seamen for seamen, the sole object being to convey the truths of the Bible to the cottages and cabins of the poor.

3. Each has a particular district assigned him. He coöperates with the church in that locality by inducing those whom he visits to attend worship.

4. Each Reader gives a monthly report of the number of visits, in how many cases he was allowed to read and pray, in how many refused, number of families destitute of the Bible, &c., &c.

It will be seen, therefore, that this labor interferes with no others; it is distinct from the work of all other societies. Many families are thus reached, who could be reached in no other way. They attend no preaching, no prayer meeting, no preacher could gain access to them. That very great good has been effected by it, cannot admit of a doubt.

A large amount of this work has been done in Germany, where it is connected with Bible distribution. In Ireland, under the direction of a society there, this work has been much blessed.

It may be said, that this is not the proper work of a Bible Society. And with equal truth it may be said, that it is not the special work of a Missionary Society. It is disseminating the Bible to the ear instead of the eye.

But if there are objections to it, as not the specific work of the Bible Society, it may be well to keep it entirely distinct, and devote to it only such funds as are given for it specifically. A Bible-reading fund may be created, and churches or individuals may be allowed to furnish the funds to sustain Bible-readers. The work will then stand on its own merits, and every one can give for it just what he pleases.

NOTE H. See Page 41.

In the Report of the Committee on Benevolent Organizations of the Monroe Association, already referred to, the following remarks occur, respecting the work of agents:—

"Here the question arises, Why should not pastors and private brethren in the churches do the work of agents in collecting and transmitting funds? In answer



to this, we ask, Will they do it, as a general rule? Has it been found safe to trust to such agencies in practice? In all our more numerous and wealthy churches, the pastor is now weighed down with the labors strictly appropriate to his office. The demand upon his time for careful preparation for the pulpit, in meeting the numerous calls to visit the sick, bury the dead, and attend upon the management of those societies and public interests which necessarily fall upon him, must in a great degree prohibit a pastor, with only ordinary amount of physical strength, from attending faithfully to the various duties now intrusted to the agents of different societies. In the present condition of things, at least, he will need to enjoy more or less active coöperation with him on the part of such agents. So far we suppose the existence of a *disposition* in pastors to do this work. The testimony of those best qualified to speak in the matter proves, on the contrary, that such a disposition is found to exist but very rarely. The agents themselves have often tried repeatedly to induce pastors of churches to undertake the responsibility. They succeed only in very few instances. While this is the case, what other resource have the societies we speak of, save that of employing agents? If it be said that private members ought to do this work, it will be seen that if it is done well by such an agency, it will cost more than by the present method. The value of the time spent in such a work by a Christian layman in prosperous business, would, in many cases, pay tenfold for the labors of the ordinary agent. If the work be given to persons whose time, from want of vigor or intelligence, is less valuable, we should naturally expect a corresponding diminution of benevolent returns. It is a universal law in matter and mind, that great results are reached *only* by a corresponding outlay of power. What we accomplish in any great enterprise, we must pay for by a corresponding amount of hard work; and your Committee believe that it will be found actually *cheaper* to continue the present system, than to absorb the valuable time and power of pastors and laymen to do the work of agents, laboring, as they evidently would, at a great disadvantage.

"Besides, the work of a *good* agent is not lost. Apart from his immediate object, he is a preacher of the Gospel. He scatters religious truth wherever he goes—enlightens the minds of our churches by the special facts and illustrations which he has prepared for the enforcement of the claims which he desires to urge. A vast amount of religious, moral, geographical, and statistical instruction is thus scattered, whose results appear in young men who are thus often led into the work of the missionary and the Gospel preacher. The labors of Luther Rice as an agent of the Triennial Convention, breathed new life and power into our churches from Maine to Louisiana. The agency labors of Fathers Bennet and Peck in our own State, in behalf of missions and other good objects, are among the choicest blessings of the past. Objections to the agent are sometimes also prompted by secret avarice, or a dislike to the objects presented for contribution. These objections ought not to be urged against the existing system as such. Again, there are inefficient and unworthy agents; perhaps there are also unworthy pastors and deacons; but these should not be taken as specimens of either class, or be used as an argument for the abolition of the offices which they bear. Considering the privations, labors, and exposure of our brethren who act as agents, we believe there is no class of men more scantily remunerated, or whose labors have a more direct bearing upon the advancement of Christ's kingdom. Your Committee believe that any prejudice that may have arisen against them as a class is the result of superficial views and imperfect examination. In case any society shall incur too heavy expenses in this particular, or send unworthy men into the churches, the remedy is simple and easily applied. The Committee feel that indiscriminate complaints do not meet the evil, while they injure the feelings of good, able, and self-sacrificing brethren."

## NOTE I. See Page 44.

The writer of this letter earnestly desires to see all our evangelizing agencies moving on harmoniously in their respective lines of labor and of usefulness. His sole object is, to unite, to heal, to encourage, to sustain, to enlarge ; not to divide, discourage, or contract. If any expression in it should be thought to indicate hostility, or indifference to any department of our great work of extending the kingdom of Christ, no one can regret it more than himself. He is no revolutionist, no society mender, never has been. He never believed in the necessity of dividing, nor subdividing, nor of consolidating our evangelizing societies. He has ever believed, and still believes, that our societies for promoting the kingdom of Christ should operate in harmony and unity, in spite of all the differences of civil government ; that there is no good reason why brethren of the same faith in all the States of the Union, should not coöperate in extending that same pure, holy, cheering Gospel which we hold in common. He regarded, and still regards, the separation of Baptists into Northern and Southern States, in their evangelizing labors, as needless and wrong. The troubles of the Foreign Mission cause were never so great as since that separation, which, instead of satisfying the Free Mission brethren, and uniting them with the Union, as many confidently predicted, has alienated them still more, so that they have taken a number of the most devoted of the missionaries of the Union under their patronage.

Not only have our Southern brethren been driven off, and the Free Mission brethren been still more alienated, but a state of feeling has come to light between the Union and their missionaries, which it is truly painful to contemplate. How came this state of things upon us? Who is responsible for it? Was the emphatic condemnation, recorded in the doings of the Union last year, just? Was it unavoidable?

How does it happen, then, that brethren who were implicated in all that condemned policy, are now so concerned lest "the denomination," should spend all its money? What vulnerable points is the smoke of a battle with our other societies needed to cover? If our societies are to be held up to reproach, as being needlessly expensive, will it not be the duty of those Baptists who think that they have something to do besides sending missionaries to Eastern Asia, as the *employés* of a consolidated society, to look into the doings by which such a state of things has grown up among our foreign missions, how much money has been lost on missions now abandoned, or on unsuitable missionaries, and still more useless deputations?

It is well to be careful of the reputation of our benevolent societies, as well as considerate of the feelings of our brethren. Few things are more destructive of the usefulness of a society than the charge of expensiveness, and the cry for revolution. It is painful to see such charges made, when it is certain that nothing but evil can result from them.













